

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The Faculty Council on Academic Standards met on Friday, **October 31, 2003** at 1:30 p.m. Chair Carolyn Plumb presided.

Synopsis

1. Approval of the minutes of the October 17, 2003 FCAS meeting.
2. Proposal for a new BFA in Digital Arts and Experimental Media. Karpen, Brixey, discussion.
3. Other SCAP business. (Two “routine” proposals passed by SCAP.
4. Revised College of Forest Resources (CFR) proposal: discussion and vote.
5. Discussion of focus of FCAS energies this year.

Approval of the minutes of the October 3, 2003 FCAS meeting

The minutes of the October 17, 2003 FCAS meeting were approved as amended.

Discussion of proposal for a new BFA in Digital Arts and Experimental Media.

Guests: Professor Richard Karpen – Director, Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS); and Associate Professor Shawn Brixey, Associate Director, Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS)

The DXARTS proposal (DXARTS-060203) was UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY VOTING MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE.

Richard Karpen, Director, Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS), when asked if students can be admitted into the DXARTS program solely on the basis of their portfolio, said, “Not typically; it’s just not possible. The expertise and foundations knowledge that is needed is not taught at many other institutions, and certainly not at pre-higher-ed levels. It’s a unique program because we are among the first in the country to offer this degree.”

Karpen said DXARTS students need 200 and 201 “to learn the technology and the culture” that permeate the program. “Majors definitely need the knowledge that they will only gain in 200 and 201,” he stressed.

Asked about transfer students, Karpen said they “might get looked at, but they still have to go through the admission process, even if they should happen to know a professor in the program.”

Shawn Brixey, Associate Director of the Center, said, “No other institution could provide these students what they need, in either the United States or Europe, with perhaps a few exceptions in Europe. We are early adopters at UW in this discipline, which is exciting, but it places us ahead of the curve in the dissemination of foundational education in the field. Students just cannot meet the conceptual demand and the rigor of our program without 200 and 201.” Karpen said, “Thus it is not currently practical to consider transfer students as majors. Transfer students are not part of the program in the foreseeable future without preparation. We just don’t have practical allowances for them. They have to go through the full preparatory process at the University of Washington. They need to prep for the major here.” He added, “It’s a very competitive program.”

Asked what kind of advertising they do to promote the DXARTS program, Karpen said, “We do advertise in various places to appeal to incoming students.” This includes everything from highlighting it in public lectures across the nation and abroad, to digital media list serves and electronic magazines that many students are aware of and read. And we expect to make sure that high school students have access to

information about the programs so they will know what our expectations are for prospective students in the program.”

Karpen said 2004 will mark the beginning of Ph.D. students in the DXARTS program. “There is no MFA as yet,” he noted. “We are preparing students for graduate work elsewhere, who may come back. We are training students so that, if they don’t get into our program, they still can use the methods and tools in other graduate programs and import some of our methods and tools into other majors they may go into, such as geography, math, or physics. But they should receive early advising on our part and elsewhere so that they can smoothly transition into another major if they do not get into our program. If they’re smart, they can do well elsewhere. It depends on the passion of the individual student, as to where they would go. But the important thing is that they need early advising.” Karpen pointed out that students “get one more chance” to get into the DXARTS program if they fail initially; thus they actually have two chances to make it into the major.

Asked about the criteria for getting into the program coming out of DXARTS 200 and 201, Brixey said there are four important criteria: 1) the quality of ideas that a student executes, and the depth of imagination in their thought process; 2) the understanding of the material presented in 200 and 201; 3) a willingness to explore, and to take chances: how much time and effort is spent in this exploration; and 4) participation in the courses: active as opposed to passive involvement in the coursework.

Asked about the importance attached to grades in evaluating students seeking entrance to the major, Karpen said, “Grades are important, but there are other important factors. It is hard to grade imagination and curiosity and willingness to investigate one’s dreams.” Plumb asked, “How do you let students know what the criteria are for the 200 and 201 courses?” Karpen said, “I visit students early on, and regular faculty make sure the students know what’s expected for them to be able to advance in the program.” Brixey added: “The online applications help pre-select students. The range of applications questions, the scope of the course’s undertaking, even the syllabus and program Website FAQ’s, all clearly lay out expectations.” Karpen said, “There are two TA’s and one lecturer in both 200 and 201. They assist the regular faculty in reviewing the students’ work, and help in the process of selecting students to enter the DXARTS major.”

As to the focus of the program, Karpen and Brixey both asserted that the primary focus is *not* a commercial one. The primary focus is a “more inventive, imaginative focus.” Students have personal time with faculty, and have a mentor for the duration of the program. As for the Senior thesis project, it is “a wildly imaginative art project for the future.” There are two TA’s and one lecturer in both 200 and 201. They assist the regular faculty in reviewing the students’ work, and help in the process of selecting students to enter the DXARTS major.

Students need to understand how labs work in the DXARTS program. TA’s are part of that lab culture. Asked if regular tenure-track faculty teach the 200 class, Karpen said, “They may teach the 200 class next year, but a lecturer is teaching the class this year.” He told the council, “We [the DXARTS program] act like a department, even though we’re not one. We’re a tight-knit group of faculty. We’ve invested a lot of our lives to make this program work. We *want* the students to succeed.”

Karpen said, “Fields with BFA programs – not just visual fields, but others such as music and dance – recognize how much time it takes to learn a complex fine arts discipline. Our students must both *learn about* art, and *learn how to do* art. They must absorb the intellectual and historical knowledge necessary to go through the program, as well as accomplish artistic projects.” Brixey said: “To this is added the knowledge and skills of computing which requires a unique program, and a highly rigorous one.”

Karpen said 125 credits are needed to complete the DXARTS program. This is similar to all other BFA degree programs, and perhaps a smaller requirement than that of some programs. “It is not just a year of thesis work,” explained Karpen. “It breaks down to conceptual work (ideation) in Autumn Quarter; building, physically and conceptually, on that ideation in Winter Quarter (proof of concept); and producing and executing a substantial work of original art, and presenting the thesis paper, in Spring Quarter. We pick the students who *can* accomplish this kind of original goal.”

Asked about the application process to the 200 course, Karpen said, “It’s an open process. We hope to increase the enrollment to 100 students; we currently have 75. Our eventual goal with this service course is to enroll upwards of 150 students. We have achieved our present enrollment, for the most part, without advertising.”

Brixey said, “Many students from electrical engineering and other science disciplines want to learn some of our program. They do collaborative work that this kind of knowledge helps with.” Karpen said, “Regarding the number of students we allow into the DXARTS program, we’re leaving seats for non-majors; we want our students to be in class – at the 400 level and at the graduate level as well – with non-majors, for cultural breadth.”

Plumb asked if DXARTS students will need general education credits to graduate. Karpen said, “Yes. We take that for granted.” Brixey said, “From the 200 course onward, 62 credits are needed before they do their senior thesis.” Asked if, in their senior year, when students take only 15 credits for their DXARTS thesis, they will take other courses, Karpen said, “Yes, absolutely. They can still take electives. Students need to take 25 elective DXARTS credits either before or after they do the senior thesis.”

Asked about mentoring, Karpen replied: “Once students are majors, they have mentors for their whole undergraduate programs.” Asked if one-on-one mentoring would give majors an advantage over non-majors in the same class, Karpen said, “No, not necessarily. Though it *could* help. It does affect a student’s trajectory, e.g., as an indirect relationship.” Karpen said, “We will have our first 300 level course soon. It may be majors only.” Plumb thanked Professors Karpen and Brixey for attending.

In the council discussion that followed, SCAP Chair Kenney said, “I’m impressed and supportive. And now our questions have been addressed, I’m satisfied. I think I know what they’re getting into.” Wiegand said, “In thinking about students transferring into the major in their second year, I’m wondering if ten spots could be held available in the 200 course for students just transferring in, who might want to become majors.” Janssen said, “In general, the proposal seems sound. If we were a private school, I’d be all for it. But it’s tough on transfers.” Kenney said, “But because it’s a very creative, experimental program, it can’t be completely traditional in its access.” Janssen said, “I approve, but I would say in a separate letter to the Provost that this is non-friendly to transfer students.” Wiegand said, “This is a cutting edge program. We can’t expect community colleges to have students prepared for this.” Kenney said, “I’d hate to turn down such a cutting edge program.” Council members concurred with Kenney.

KENNEY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL. WOODS SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTING MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE DXARTS PROPOSAL (DXARTS-060203).

Other SCAP business (Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs) – SCAP Chair, Nancy Kenney

The following proposals were deemed “routine” by SCAP at its meeting on October 24, 2003:

1. School of Public Health and Community Medicine – Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences (ENV H-101603). Revised major (Bachelor of Science). “Students completing the DEH Undergraduate program often are expected to be conversant with both environmental and occupational health principles and technical skills. In an effort to streamline undergraduate curriculum in the area of sampling and analytical techniques, we have reconfigured three existing courses (Env H 430 – Methods in Environmental Sampling and Analysis, Env H 431 – Environmental Health Sampling and Analysis II, and Env H 454 – Environmental Health Measurements). The content of these three courses have been merged into a coherent three quarter sequence of courses that will reduce redundancy and leverage the similarities between environmental and occupational exposure assessment methods and analytical techniques. The new three quarter sequence includes one quarter of primarily lecture and two quarters of integrated lecture and laboratory. The new series is Env H 431, Env H 432, and Env H 433.”

2. College of Engineering – All Academic Degree Programs (ENGR-101703). Revised program requirements for all Bachelor degree majors in the College of Engineering. “The proposed change calls for the removal of the in-depth sequence requirement as part of the Visual, Literary, & Performing Arts and Individuals & Societies program requirement for all undergraduate engineering programs. The rationale for this change is that it does not necessarily add value to an undergraduate engineering student’s educational experience at the University of Washington and is no longer critical in program accreditation. Students, staff, and faculty have found students’ satisfying this requirement cumbersome at times, especially for students who wish to pursue breadth in selecting VLPA/I&S courses. Students will still need to continue to take at least 10 credits each of VLPA and I&S courses and additional credits to satisfy the minimum VLPA/I&S College graduation requirement of 24 credits (specific degree programs will continue to have the option of requiring more credits).”

Revised College of Forest Resources (CFR) proposal: discussion and vote

Plumb said, “One of the questions we had on this proposal was whether all students would need to do the concentration.” Kenney said, “What we need to know is: What *are* the concentrations? What courses must be taken?” Plumb said, “I received an E-mail from Dean Bare. They won’t have concentrations. And only 15 credits have to be at the 400 level.” Kenney said, “Psychology doesn’t have more than 15 400 level credit requirements. It varies from department to department as to whether 400 builds on 300.”

Plumb said, “We don’t want to consider the name; we’re sending that issue to the Provost. We wanted to know about the concentration; they’ve responded. And they’ve told us about the 400-level specifications. Students will be encouraged to follow a pre-packaged program or a broad array of courses. They want to do program development through advising, and keep it flexible.” Kenney said, “They have a lot of 400-level classes; more than at the 300 level.” She concluded: “I say we should approve the proposal, and send a letter to the Provost detailing our concerns.”

JANSSEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE COLLEGE OF FOREST RESOURCES PROPOSAL. WOODS SECONDED THE MOTION.

VOTING MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE COLLEGE OF FOREST – ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL (ENVSCI-040403), AND TO SEND A LETTER TO THE PROVOST DETAILING THE COUNCIL’S CONCERNS, AND ASKING THE PROVOST TO CONSIDER THE ISSUE OF THE PROPOSED TITLE OF THE PROGRAM.

Discussion of focus of FCAS energies this year – Carolyn Plumb

Academic Integrity

Plumb said the council may want to develop a statement or honor code or recommendation on academic integrity at the University of Washington. She noted that this issue arose last year, and that Undergraduate Education Dean George Bridges placed strong emphasis on this issue in council discussions. Buck said that in Orientation this autumn, “They really pushed academic integrity. George Bridges is moving well on this issue. We could commend him and those working with him, and encourage them to continue this excellent effort.” Plumb said, “I’m on the Undergraduate Advisory Council. We’ll be meeting on Monday (November 3rd); I’ll apprise you of the meeting’s discussions.”

Departmental Enrollment Capacities

Janssen said, “There’s a survey on this subject. I’ll delve through it and organize it into competitive and non-competitive majors, and see where we need information. This information should be conveyed to the students.”

Access to Majors

Kenney said it would be good to provide students with a Website to show them what various majors have been doing over the last several years with respect to access [to majors]. Several council members concurred that this would be an excellent service to students.

Student Learning Objectives

What role does FCAS want to play in the discussion of student learning objectives? Plumb said, “The current Student Learning Objectives system does not address what students are learning; it only addresses what teachers think they are teaching.” It was noted that Gerald Gillmore, Director Emeritus of the Office of Educational Assessment (OEA), is working on this issue, and could be asked to visit the council. The University of Washington has to respond to the accreditation board, and a statement about student learning objectives will be included in that response. Buck said that different groups are discussing this issue, but that these groups are not necessarily coordinating with one another. He said it would be helpful if there were a concerted effort to coordinate these separate discussions. “I’m interested in laying the groundwork for addressing this,” he said.

Woods said that, in Nursing, “We have received from George Bridges’s office eight curricular questions to show to our department to see what curricular criteria are being met. Woods added that it “would be useful” to find out what students’ perspectives are on courses they have taken at the University.

Plumb said she will ask Gerald Gillmore to visit the council, and will check with the Faculty Council on Instructional Quality (FCIQ) about a possible joint meeting with that council.

Next meeting

The next FCAS meeting is set for Friday, November 14, 2003, at 1:30 p.m., in 142 Gerberding Hall.

Brian Taylor, Recorder

PRESENT: *Professors* Plumb (Chair), Buck, Janssen, Keith, Kenney and Woods;

Ex officio members Pitre, Richards and Wiegand;

Regular guest Robert Corbett

Guests Professor Richard Karpen – Director, Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS); and Shawn Brixey, Associate Director, DXARTS.

ABSENT: *Professors* Fan, Gianola, Labossiere, Newell, Reusch, Simon and Stygall;

Ex officio members Bridges, Morales, Navin and Washburn.